

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) An image forming sheet comprising a substrate which comprises a laminate structure of a plurality of sheets;

a receptive layer provided on the substrate; and

an identification mark being embedded in the substrate and provided between said plurality of sheets so that the identification mark being unable within said sheet, said mark being less likely to be visually perceived from the external appearance of said sheet, the image forming sheet, having a laminate structure of a plurality of substrate sheets and the identification mark being provided between said plurality of substrate sheets, said plurality of substrate sheets being whitish thereby concealing the identification mark from human's eyes, said identification mark comprising a mark for identifying the presence of absence of the image forming sheet and/or the type of the image forming sheet, the mark containing a material which is capable of absorbing an electromagnetic radiation with a wavelength λ_1 and is capable of emitting an electromagnetic radiation with a wavelength λ_2 being different from the wavelength λ_1 .

2. (previously cancelled).

3. (cancelled).

4. (amended) The image forming sheet according to claim ~~[[3]]~~ 1, wherein said electromagnetic radiation with a wavelength λ_1 absorbed by said material is infrared radiation and said electromagnetic radiation with a wavelength λ_2 emitted from said material is also infrared radiation.

5. (amended) The image forming sheet according to any one of claims 1~~[[,]]~~ 3,~~]]~~ and 4, which is a thermal transfer image receiving sheet.

6. (amended) An identification method comprising the steps of: providing the image forming sheet according to any one of claims 1~~[[,]]~~ and ~~3 to 5~~ 4; and detecting the identification mark provided in the image forming sheet with a sensor to identify the presence or absence of the image forming sheet and/or the type of the image forming sheet.

7. (amended) An image forming apparatus comprising:
a sensor which, when the image forming sheet according to any one of claims 1~~[[,]]~~ and ~~3 to 5~~ 4 has been placed in said apparatus, detects the identification mark provided in the image forming sheet;

a discrimination means for performing discrimination for identifying the presence or absence of the image forming sheet and/or the type of the image forming sheet based on a signal detected by the sensor; and

a control unit for determining the operation of image formation based on the result of discrimination treatment.

8. (new) An identification method comprising the steps of: providing the image forming sheet according to claim 5; and detecting the identification mark provided in the image forming sheet with a sensor to identify the presence or absence of the image forming sheet and/or the type of the image forming sheet.

9. (new) An image forming apparatus comprising:

a sensor which, when the image forming sheet according to claim 5 has been placed in said apparatus, detects the identification mark provided in the image forming sheet;

a discrimination means for performing discrimination for identifying the presence or absence of the image forming sheet and/or the type of the image forming sheet based on a signal detected by the sensor; and

a control unit for determining the operation of image formation based on the result of discrimination treatment.